Morning Prayer

Tuesday, December 26, 2006

Saint Stephen, the First Martyr

OPENING

O God, come to my assistance.

Lord, make haste to help me.

Lord, open my lips.

And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

HYMN

O Come, All Faithful

O come, all faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord;
born this happy morning, O come and adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

God of God, Light of Light,
he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
very God, begotten not created:
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all you citizens of heaven above;
glory to God in the highest:
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory given;
word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Psalm 101 *A Prayer in Affliction*

> *Ant. Today Christ is born for us; glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.*

O Lord, hear my prayer, and let my cry come to you.

Do not turn your face away from me; in the day when I am troubled, incline your ear to me.

In whatever day I will call upon you, quickly hear me.

For my days have passed away like smoke, and my bones have been dried up like dried wood.

I have been struck like hay, and my heart has dried up; because I forgot to eat my bread.

From the voice of my groaning, my bone clung to my flesh.

I have become like a pelican in the desert; I have become like an owl in a house without a roof.

I have kept watch, and I have become like a lonely sparrow on a rooftop.

All day long my enemies have reproached me, and those who praised me swore against me.

For I ate ashes like bread, and I mixed my drink with weeping.

From the face of your anger and your indignation; for lifting me up, you have thrown me down.

My days have declined like a shadow, and I have withered like hay.

But you, O Lord, endure forever, and your remembrance from generation to generation.

You will rise up and have mercy on Zion; for its time to have mercy on it, for the time has come.

For your servants have been pleased with its stones, and they will have pity on its earth.

And the nations will fear your name, O Lord, and all kings of the earth your glory.

For the Lord has built up Zion, and he will be seen in his glory.

He has had regard for the prayer of the humble, and he has not despised their petition.

Let these things be written for another generation, and a people that will be created will praise the Lord.

For he has looked down from his high place; the Lord has looked down from heaven to the earth.

To hear the groaning of the shackled, to release the children of the slain.

So that they may declare the name of the Lord in Zion and his praise in Jerusalem.

When peoples and kings assembled together, to serve the Lord.

He answered him in the way of his strength: "Declare to me the fewness of my days."

"Do not call me back in the middle of my days: your years are throughout all generations."

"In the beginning, you founded the earth, O Lord, and the heavens are the works of your hands."

"They will perish, but you will remain; and all of them will grow old like a garment."

"And like a vesture, you will change them, and they will be changed. But you are always the same, and your years will not fail."

"The sons of your servants will dwell, and their offspring will be directed forever."

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

> *Ant. Today Christ is born for us; glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.*

Psalm 144 *I Will Extol You, O God My King (Part I)*

> *Ant. Today Christ is born for us; glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.*

I will exalt you, O God my King, and I will bless your name forever and ever.

Every day I will bless you, and I will praise your name forever and ever.

Great is the Lord and greatly praiseworthy, and of his greatness there is no end.

Generation after generation will praise your works, and they will declare your power.

They will speak of the magnificence of the glory of your holiness, and they will narrate your wonders.

And they will speak of the virtue of your terrible acts, and they will describe your greatness.

They will pour out the memory of the abundance of your sweetness, and they will rejoice in your justice.

The Lord is gracious and merciful, patient and of great mercy.

The Lord is sweet in all things and his mercy is over all his works.

Let all your works confess to you, O Lord, and let your holy ones bless you.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

> *Ant. Today Christ is born for us; glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.*

OLD TESTAMENT CANTICLE

OLD TESTAMENT CANTICLE (JEREMIAH 31:15–17)

Thus says the Lord: "A voice was heard on high of lamentation, of mourning, and weeping; of Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted for them, because they are not."

Thus says the Lord: "Let your voice cease from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for there is a reward for your work," says the Lord.

"And they will return from the land of the enemy."

"There is hope for your last end," says the Lord; "and the children will return to their own borders."

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

SHORT READING

LUKE 2:10–11

The angel said to them: "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a Savior has been born, who is Christ the Lord."

RESPONSORY

V. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

R. and we have seen his glory.

V. Full of grace and truth,

R. we have seen his glory.

GOSPEL CANTICLE: BENEDICTUS (LUKE 1:68-79)

THE CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH (BENEDICTUS) (LUKE 1:68–79)

> *Ant. Today Christ is born; today the Savior has appeared; today the angels are singing on earth.*

Blessed is the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has visited and accomplished the redemption of his people.

And he has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David his servant.

As he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets, those who have been from the beginning:

Salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

To show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant,

the oath which he swore to our father Abraham, that he would grant to us,

that being freed from the hand of our enemies, we might serve him without fear,

in holiness and justice before him, throughout all our days.

And you, child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his ways.

To give knowledge of salvation to his people, for the remission of their sins,

through the compassionate mercy of our God, by which the Rising Sun has visited us from on high,

to illuminate those sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, to direct our feet in the way of peace.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

> *Ant. Today Christ is born; today the Savior has appeared; today the angels are singing on earth.*

MORNING INTERCESSIONS

Rejoicing in the birth of Christ our Savior, let us offer our prayers, saying:

For peace in the world, that the Prince of Peace may reign in every heart and in every nation: we pray to you, O Lord. — *Glory to God in the highest.*

For children and families, especially those experiencing poverty, that they may know the warmth and security that the Holy Family sought: we pray to you, O Lord. — *Glory to God in the highest.*

For refugees and those far from home, that they may find welcome and shelter: we pray to you, O Lord. — *Glory to God in the highest.*

For our parish and our bishop, that the joy of Christmas may deepen our life together in faith: we pray to you, O Lord. — *Glory to God in the highest.*

For those for whom Christmas is a time of grief or loneliness, that your comfort may surround them: we pray to you, O Lord. — *Glory to God in the highest.*

For a spirit of generosity in this season, that we may share our gifts as God has shared the greatest gift: we pray to you, O Lord. — *Glory to God in the highest.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Let us pray as the Lord himself has taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, by your incarnation you have joined heaven and earth and reconciled all people to yourself. Grant that in all we do this day we may reflect the light of your presence; who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

DISMISSAL

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

May almighty God bless us: the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.